SW MONTHLY FIRE WEATHER / FIRE DANGER OUTLOOK

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1. **SOUTHWEST AREA**

2. **CURRENT DATE:** July 31, 2006 **COVERS PERIOD**: **August 1 - 31, 2006**

3. **POTENTIAL FOR SERIOUS/CRITICAL FIRE PROBLEMS**

Significant Fire Potential: August 2006	Below Normal		Normal	x	Above Normal	
Significant Fire Potention: Fire Season 2006 (March-Sept.)	Below Normal		Normal	x	Above Normal	x

4. **WEATHER FACTORS AND OUTLOOK:**

Drought Conditions : Moderate to extreme drought conditions continue to cover all of Arizona , New Mexico and west Texas . The current U.S seasonal drought outlook released July 20 th shows some improvement for eastern Arizona and much of New Mexico due to monsoon-related rainfall, but long-term drought is expected to persist across the remainder of the region through October 2006.

Precipitation Anomalies and Outlook : There was a large variability of precipitation across Arizona and New Mexico in July. A large swath of between 0 to 40% of normal precipitation occurred across southeastern New Mexico and adjacent west Texas . Much of the remainder of the region received 75% to 150% of normal rainfall, with the higher terrain of northern Arizona and New Mexico receiving up to 250% of normal. The outlook for August calls for near normal precipitation across the entire region, though below normal rainfall is expected across portions of west Texas .

Temperature Anomalies and Outlook : Average temperatures were above normal across the entire area in July, ranging from 4 to 6 degrees above normal across the southwest half of Arizona to 1 to 3 degrees above normal elsewhere. The outlook for August calls for continued above normal temperatures across the entire region.

5. **FUEL FACTORS AND OUTLOOK:**

CURRENT FINE FUELS:

GRASS STAGE:	**Green**	x	**Cured**	x				
	Some green returning due to onset of monsoon moisture over the Area.							
NEW GROWTH:	**Sparse**		**Normal**		**Above Normal**			

LIVE FUEL MOISTURE: (April - September Only)	**Min**	**Max**	**Average**	**+/- previous month**
Fir, Douglas	88	145	117	+6
Juniper, One-Seed	45	116	84	+5
Pine, Pinon	77	118	99	-5
Pine, Ponderosa	85	136	109	+3
Sagebrush	61	130	109	+2

1000-HOUR DEAD FUEL MOISTURE:	16
AVERAGE 1000-HOUR FUEL MOISTURE FOR THIS TIME OF THE YEAR:	14-20

6. **FIRE OCCURRENCE:**

ALL FIRES	**YTD Actual through July**	**YTD Historical Avg. through July**	**Average for August**	**Median for August**	**YTD Historical Avg. through August**
FIRES:	5,035	3,486	518	459	3,955
ACRES:	740,585	293,292	30,252	24,608	320,853

Data Years: 1994 - 2005

LARGE FIRES ONLY	**YTD Actual through July**	**YTD Historical Avg. through July**	**Average for August**	**Median for August**	**YTD Historical Avg. through August**
FIRES:	131	78	11	7	89

Data Years: 1991 - 2005

7. **IMPLICATIONS:**

Precipitation Outlook
Normal , except below normal in portions of west Texas.

Temperature Outlook
Above Normal

Fuels and Fire Danger
Normal significant fire potential is expected across the Southwest Area in August. Monsoon moisture in place will keep the potential for significant large fire activity at near normal seasonal levels. Though hot temperatures will create short-term periods of enhanced fire potential throughout the month, an increase in initial attack and short duration large fire activity in lighter fuels will be the main result. Fuel conditions are expected to remain very dry across west Texas, but windy and dry conditions sufficient to create significant fire activity in that area occur on average only once per month during August.

Prescribed Fire Implications
Prescribed fire activity is at a minimum in August and is usually constrained to small scale maintenance and pile burning. Units conducting such operations will want to be mindful of short periods of hot and dry conditions, as larger fuel classes remain rather dry and could become a factor after a few days of hot and dry weather. Smoke dispersion predictability will be below normal due to light and variable winds and those associated with thunderstorms.

Resource Implications
With above normal temperatures and normal precipitation expected through August, initial attack resources will respond to a number of new fires. However, fuel conditions, humidity, and low-level moisture will cause fuels to be less receptive to large expansive fires. This does not mean an occasional large fire will not occur, but the numbers should remain within normal range (i.e. approximately two-percent of all fires for the month - avg. 518 fires and 11 large). August is traditionally a downward month relative to the number of fires through the normal (large) fire season period. Adequate local resources are in place going into the month. Air tankers, Type 1 and Type 2 helicopters, and Type 1 crew usage will be minimal. Engines will be active by mid-month as fuels dry and new fires potentially pop-up, but the number of responses will be below average. Historically, less than one incident during August requires the usage of an Incident Management Team (Type 1 and 2). Expectations are we will not exceed this average for the month.

	YTD Actual through July	**YTD Historical Avg. through July**	**Average for August**	**Median for August**	**YTD Historical Avg. through August**
NUMBER OF INCIDENTS WHERE AT LEAST ONE TEAM WAS ASSIGNED	23	15	>1	>1	15

Data Years: 1991 - 2005

8. **MAP**